CONCEPTUAL NEEDLES IN THEORETICAL HAYSTACKS: THE NOTION OF CONFLICT IN DURKHEIM AND WEBER

David Earl Sutherland
University of Kansas

> Many complain that the words of the wise are always merely parables and of no use in daily life, which is the only life we have. When the sage says: "Go over," he does not mean that we should cross to some actual place, which we could do anyhow if the labor were worth it; he means some fabulous yonder, something unknown to us, something too that he cannot designate more precisely, and therefore cannot help us here in the very least. All these parables really set out to say merely that the incomprehensible is incomprehensible, and we know that already. But the cares we have to struggle with every day: that is a different matter.
>
> Concerning this a man once said: Why such reluctance? If you only followed the parables you yourselves would become parables and with that rid of all your daily cares.
>
> Another said: I bet that is also a parable.
>
> The first said: You have won.
>
> The second said: But unfortunately only in parable.
>
> The first said: No, in reality: in parable you have lost.
>
> Franz Kafka
> "On Parables"

Introduction

The primary focal point of this paper is an investigation into the significance, if any, of the idea of conflict in two "classical" sociologists--Emile Durkheim (1958-1917) and Max Weber (1964-1920). Although both developed sociology par excellence in their respective countries and were contemporaneous,[1] neither seemed conscious of the other--they worked separately.

The analysis of conflict comprises an exercise in comparative theoretical analysis. The first problem, then, will be to present a framework for comparing Durkheim and Weber. After a brief comment on the "times" in which they wrote, we move to an examination of conflict in first Durkheim and then Weber. The paper will end with a comparison and conclusion.

I. A Framework for Comparative Study of Sociological Theory

The solution to this task is "relatively" simple in that all one needs to know is (1) what are the essential parts of a theory, (2) fill in the empty cells of these elements of a theory for any given theorist, and (3) compare the respective results for two (or more) theorists. In addition to setting forth a framework for theory construction, a further requisite exists; namely, the analysis of a concept, since that is the purpose of this paper. Thus conflict has two possible "meanings" in this paper: (1) as an element in a theoretical framework and/or (2) as a concept (the latter will become more clear below).

A. Components of a Frame of Reference

In the most general terms, a theory can be thought of as a series of interrelated propositions that serve (among other things) to explain and understand not only past and current empirical phenomena, but also to order and predict future endeavors in science. The goal of theory is to maximize rationality to the broadest range of experience--to allow science to obtain its more commonly recognized goals of description, prediction, explanation, control, and the like. Behind such systematic, interrelated propositions (of whatever generality) is a theoretical frame of reference.[2]

To derive an adequate theory (in a minimal sense) one must consider three sets of problems that are logically a priori to a theory---(1) Formulation of a theoretical domain. This is a statement of the event(s), the unit(s) to which the theory addresses itself; thus sociologists speak of dyads, small groups, communities, bureaucracies, institutions, society, population, etc. (2) A statement of the problem(s) to be explained--specification of the effect variables that the theory seeks to account for. (3) Propositions further specifying the set of explanatory variables by which one accounts for (or at least believes that one can) the effect variables; then one must set forth the relations between the explanatory and effect variables. Cutting across the formulation of these three problem sets are the problems involved in stating and defining the property concepts and consequently the variables actually studied. This involves development of a terminology or notation that allows for clear expression of the main theoretical ideas; i.e., terms and definitions. Finally there is a category of statements which, while not logically presupposed, are in practice usually presupposed for any relatively complex theoretical formulation. These are strategy rules--guiding premises "which constitute simplifying assumptions about the domain which guide the development of theoretical propositions."[3]

B. Problems of Conceptual Analysis: Property-Concepts

Discussions on methodology usually concentrate directly on this area of concern--the question of relating theory and methodology. Conceptual validation requires justification of the formulation of units of interest (what the concepts "apply to"), and selected properties of concepts; and justification of the appropriateness of the research methods proposed to investigate those properties that have been conceptualized ("operationalizing" the ideas). In short, any concept has a "theoretical import" and an "empirical import."

The theoretical import of a concept concerns its membership as part of a system of correlated "properties" to which it is related either as cause, or effect, or both. Its usefulness is not its own unique presentation per se, but its incorporation into a verified theory which systematically specifies its relationship with other relevant properties. We clearly desire "theoretical integration"..... The empirical import of a concept delineates three problem-sets: (1) operationality; (2) internal consistency between measures; and (3) external independence from other operations. Our first problem (the "operational import" of a concept) is the claim that certain methods of observation can be derived through which objects (in the broadest sense of that word) can be classified in terms of the designated property. However, such operationalism should not be assumed to be a 1-1 relationship between the theoretical definition

and the observation of an empirical property. On the contrary, theoretical definitions usually imply that 2 or more such operational procedures can be developed--each of which can be utilized independently of the others. As such, one has an "operational set," which leads us to the second problem.

The internal consistency of empirical observations requires that the various possible operations included in an operational set will yield comparable results; for example, two alternative measures should change together in the same way over time. Note, however, that (1) such sets comprise a finite number of possible measurements and (2) not all possible measurements are equally relevant--there can be a "best" choice. Finally, the external independence of a concept is the claim that operations not implied by the operation set will not consistently correlate with those measures within the operation set. This is not to confuse correlations involving causal connections, but rather this is a problem of "purity," of "noncontamination."

Justification of the theoretical import of our concepts hinges on the "state of the union" of sociological theory; as a minimum, it should not be inconsistent with other relevant theories, and for high levels of validity, a theory should provide a substantive rationale--loosely put, it should "make sense." Justification of the empirical import involves much of the kind of work generally called measurement--the formation of scalar properties (nominal, ordinal, etc.), statement of a "unit of measurement" (rare in social science), actually studying the uniformity of correlations between the procedures implied within the operation set, and so on (Martel calls these validation problems the "formal import" of a concept).

The discussion so far no doubt seems rather abstract and the reader might well wonder how this relates to what is the topic at hand. The relevance will now become clear. As mentioned earlier, this paper requires a comparative analysis of (in this case) two theorists. To do this one must first, clarify the significance of conflict for each respective writer and secondly, compare the results. What we want to know and establish is the import of the concept of conflict for them. It is precisely in terms of these series of problems of theory construction and empirical verification given above that we shall investigate the topic. What is the theoretical import of conflict for Durkheim and Weber? The empirical import? Within the latter, how do they handle it operationally? Internal consistency? External consistency? In what way is the "formal import" of the property concept conflict carried out? What are the units? Scaling properties (dichotomous, ordered, ranked, etc.)? Uniformity of correlations? Most of our attention will be on the empirical import because of the lack of sufficiently developed theories in sociology that would allow an evaluation of the theoretical import--even in such classic writers as Durkheim and Weber.[4]

Moreover, the general discussion of a frame of reference provides criteria that allow a comparison. That is, to ask about the comparability of two (or more) theories is only meaningful in so far as there is a commonality in (1) the domains (the "units" of analysis); (2) the effect variables (what the problem(s) is (are)); and (3) the causal variables. To what "units" does conflict apply to in Durkheim and Weber? Is conflict used as the point of departure (what is to be explained) or is it used as an effect variable to explain something else? In short, how is the idea of conflict used in the theoretical works of Durkheim and Weber? If such use exists, is it a comparable one? Put concisely, Martel's work supplies the criteria for the analysis of and comparison of theories.

One last warning before getting into the substantive content of this paper. The interest here is only in what role conflict plays in the writers under examination. As such this paper is not concerned with a general evaluation of these theories in light of Martel's scheme. However, from time to time statements are made that point in such a direction. There will be no special effort at validating such general evaluations; indeed, it is hoped that they are of such a common nature as to arouse no substantive doubts so as to cast doubts on the results of this paper as far as the analysis of conflict goes.

II. "The Decade of the 1890's"[5]

Hughes documents brilliantly the conditions "setting up" the tremendous surge in conceptual thinking in the social sciences that developed in those years shortly before and after the turn of the century--especially in the fields of history, anthropology, psychology, and sociology. His book focuses on a virtual "rogues gallery": Freud, Durkheim, Sorel, Croce, Weber, Jung, and Pareto to name a few. The general thesis (as implied in the title) is the developing concern with "consciousness"--taken in its broadest connotations (i.e., from Freud's unconsciousness/consciousness motif to Durkheim's "collective consciousness"[6]). More explicitly, Hughes delineates five "major ideas" occurring in this period:

(1) A new interest in the problem of consciousness and the role of the unconscious
(2) The problem of irrational motivation for human conduct
(3) A coming to terms with Marxism
(4) The meaning of time and duration in psychology, philosophy, literature and history
(5) The problem of knowledge in what Dilthey called the "sciences of the mind" (Geisteswissenschaften)[7]

A shift also developed in a basic departing point:

> They had displaced the axis of social thought from the apparent and objectively verifiable to the only partially conscious area of unexplained motivation. In this sense the new doctrines were manifestly subjective.[8]

One is again tempted to overstate the case by suggesting (for sociology at least) a shift from Durkheim's positivistic rule of treating social facts as "things"[9] to be explained only by other social facts to Weber's verstehende Soziologie.[10] But the point remains there was a "stir" in the social sciences.

Of particular relevance for this paper is the third point mentioned by Hughes--a coming to terms with Marx as almost a prerequisite for social thought. Whether one did or not is not so crucial here as the fact that there did exist in those years a rather developed social theory very much focusing on social conflict. Although it is difficult to assess the stature of Marx's work then (compared to now), he was known to Weber and Durkheim. Neither could deny the existence of conflict theory.

In addition to a coherent and fairly systematic body of work centering on conflict, the actual times themselves were turbulent--the disgrace of France in 1870-71; the Dreyfus Affair, industrialization, Bismarck Germany, and of course World War I.[10] Durkheim and Weber both involved themselves in politics, especially during the war. They both lived in times filled with potential and actual conflict and each, at one time or another, concerned himself with the "state of the union." There seems little doubt, then, that abundant opportunity existed for an involvement with conflict in their capacity as sociologists. The question is, of course, did they so incorporate conflict in their writings? It is to this question that we now turn.

III. Durkheim

Very often a man's involvement in politics is related to his awareness of conflict as a relevant variable in thinking about man. In Durkheim's case the evidence is unfortunately mixed. Alpert says that the early days of the Third Republic in France provided a significant backdrop for Durkheim's work--that he (Durkheim) was concerned with the Republican ideals of democracy and secularism, and that positive science (in the Comte tradition) could be a tool for attaining such ends.

> In this task of socially and morally reconstituting a nation, his nation, which had just thrown off the yoke of the Empire but which, at the same time, suffered an ignominious and humiliating defeat at the hands of the enemy, Emile Durkheim was anxious to play a role. He had a mission. Now, combine this discontent with philosophy with the desire to serve the Republic, add a belief in the efficacy of scientific procedure, and one is almost inevitably led to the realization of both the necessity for, and the important function of, a science of social phenomena.[11]

Nisbet and Coser call him a conservative--a political stance that directly affected his sociology.[12] On the Dreyfus Affair, Peyre writes that Durkheim "must have been profoundly moved by the venomous partisanship of that civil war" but that he "hardly took notice of it in his writings."[13] In contrast, Alpert notes:

> We regret not having more information about Durkheim's part in the Dreyfus Case. He was among the unsung heroes of that dramatic struggle for justice and liberty. He exerted himself unstintingly for the liberal cause. See Kayser, J., The Dreyfus Affair...p. 183 where Durkheim's name appears among the volunteers in the 'Army of Justice.'[14]

However, all agree that with the advent of World War I, Durkheim gave his services towards writing nationalist tracts blaming Germany for instigating the war. Minimally, then, Durkheim was not ignorant of political affairs which exhibited conflict. But what about his actual work?

On the basis of previous reading of Durkheim, we decided to restrict the attention of this paper to three of his four major studies: The Division of Labor in Society, The Rules of Sociological Method, and Suicide. His work

on religion was omitted because this represented a shift in attention to the realm of sociology of knowledge, philosophy of knowledge, and the moral basis of societal integration founded in religion (this concern with "morals" permeates all his studies and the others are sufficient to handle this point for this paper; of course if this were a "general" evaluation, the shift in explanatory variables for solidarity from the division of labor to religion is obviously important). The latter study constitutes the "idealist shift" mentioned by Parsons.[15]

The study of conflict through Durkheim is an extremely backhanded way of approaching the problem, for the effect variable dominating Durkheim's work is that of order in society (and groups within society). In this respect this writer is mildly pleased to find one source of agreement between two otherwise divergent sociologists--Parsons and Coser.

> It can be said, I think, that it was the problem of the integration of the social system, of what holds societies together, which was the most persistent preoccupation of Durkheim's career.[16]

> The problem of order preoccupied Durkheim from his earliest writings to the last pages of the Introduction a la morale, a paper he wrote shortly before his death. Directly or indirectly, all of his writings are related to this problem.[17]

The operning pages of his first major work openly expresses the concern with what he called the "moral order":

> For it is impossible for men to live togehter, associating in industry, without acquiring a sentiment of the whole formed by their union, without attaching themselves to that whole, preoccupying themselves with its interests, and taking account of it in their conduct...This subordination of particular interests to the general interest is, indeed, the source of all moral activity.[18]

> This book is pre-eminently an attempt to treat the facts of the moral life according to the method of the positive sciences.[19]

Simply put, His unit is society (though he does discuss groups within society); his effect variable is "solidarity" or order; and his causal variable is the division of labor (and shifts to religion as a collective representation of society).[20] Thus in his major statement on methodology, the actual domain of (presumably all) sociology per se is that of order ("constraint"):

> Here, then, is a category of facts with very distinctive characteristics: it consists of ways of acting, thinking, and feeling, external to the individual, and endowed with a power of coercion, by reason of which they control him.[21]

The meaning of constraint also shifts throughout his writing,[22] but our purpose does not concern an exposition of Durkheim in general, but only with reference to conflict.

There are two routes to conflict in Durkheim ideas; namely, his discussion of "pathology" and, of course, his idea on anomie. Book Three of his Ph.D. dissertation concerns "abnormal forms;" i.e., cases in which the increasing division of labor does not lead to increased organic solidarity. He mentions five examples of the "anomic" divison of labor: (1) commercial crises as indexed by the number of business failures (Note: the first suggestion as to a measure of "anomy"); (2) conflict between labor and capital (the only place I have found the term conflict used)--in so far as industrial functions become more specialized, conflict becomes more likely; and (3) science--as a specialization of tasks increases, the unity of science is lost because no one can master all the sciences for an "overview." The reason why these pathological forms occur are first, lack of contact and duration of contact between the organs (a "communications-time" factor); and secondly, the worker is so isolated that he cannot see enough of the "total picture" to understand what significance his actions have beyond themselves.[23] The other two examples are (4) class-wars due to a lack of "fit" between one's assigned task and one's abilities (this is the most direct reference to "class") and (5) conditions such that the work assigned is "not only not considerable, but even insufficient" resulting in faulty solidarity; i.e., the workers' activities are "discontinuous" and cannot "adjust themselves exactly to one another and move in concert."[24] If these pathological cases do, in some sense, fall under the rubric of conflict, then conflict operates as an effect variable--a "problem" in pathology to be explained (away?).

He develops more abstractly the idea of pathology in his methodological work; although confusion exists at this level. In the Division of Labor pathological phenomena depart from a kind of average or modal behavior--in the Rules, this is changed. We can approach the problem only through Durkheim's account of "normalcy;" i.e., pathological presumably is the obverse of normal. Consider the following:

> We shall call "normal" these social conditions that are most generally distributed, and the others "morbid" or "pathological." If we designate as "average type" that hypothetical being that is constructed by assembling in the same individual, the most frequent forms, one may say that the normal type emerges with the average type, and that every deviation from this standard of health is a morbid phenomenon.[25]

This implies a statistical frequency criterion; i.e., if behavior X is "average" thoughout a given unit A, presumably X exemplifies "normal" behavior. But note the shift:

> A social fact is normal, in relation to a given social type at a given phase of its development, when it is present in the average society of that species at the corresponding phase of its evolution.[26]

As an example Durkheim says (it's one of his classic statements) crime is "normal" because it:

> is present not only in the majority of societies on one particular species, but in all societies of all types. There is no society that is not confronted with the problem of criminality...There is, then, no phenomenon that presents more indisputably all the symptoms of normality, since it appears closely connected with the conditions of collective life.[27]

This analysis is not based on an "average" within one society, but is a simple dichotomous attribute (present/absent) counted over several societies; i.e., crime is present in all societies, hence crime is normal. This is not saying that the average behavior of societal members can be described as "criminal" (indeed, Durkheim speaks of crime up to a given level). Our question here is how does one make observations establishing normal/pathological events? A simple count of present/absent? Deviation from a "mean"? Durkheim himself worked with laws as a measure of integration and a reflection of shifts from mechanical to organic solidarity, but he did not "count" them. Moreover, note that the term pathological carries negative connotations--it is stated negatively as a departure from the normal. Even assuming that his discourse on pathology does, as a matter of fact, provide us with that part of his theoretical sociology "concerned" with conflict, clearly conflict does not carry the kinds of "positive" attributes that Coser finds in Simmel.[28]

Finally, in the most empirical effort in Suicide, Durkheim visualizes suicide rates as a reflection of underlying degrees of integration characterizing groups. (One is tempted to comment that since suicide occurs in all the societies Durkheim examined, suicide is "normal." True the rates may vary, but why should variation in rates invalidate the fact that its occurrence is uniform? Yet surely the anomic suicide is a "pathological" condition for Durkheim; he thought so.) If there is any element of Durkheim's scheme concerning conflict, anomic suicide--and the concept of anomie--fits the bill. Anomie arises under conditions in which normlessness or "de-regulation" occurs--the abrupt loss of regulations that provide the necessary constraints to man's insatiable "passions." Indeed, anomie has since been used to "explain" "deviant behavior"--crime, delinquency, alcoholism, addiction, and the like.[29] Durkheim himself applied anomie to only three cases: (1) suicides due to economic crisis;[30] (2) suicides occurring at the crisis of widowhood ("domestic anomy"); and (3) suicides of divorced people ("conjugal suicide").[31]

The reader should note that no where does Durkheim actually measure anomie or investigate its own empirical properties. His argument is that suicides during economic crises, by widows, or among divorcees are to be classified as anomic suicides--this is assignment by definition vis a vis the meaning of the concept anomie; there is no independent assessment of anomie such that it is found more often among widows, etc. Anomie itself is a concept that serves as an intervening variable-- as a causal variable to explain the differential suicide rates in these groups compared to others. Anomic suicide cannot be nor does Durkheim propose it as a direct measure of anomie. For him to have done so, would have resulted in a tautology: suicides of widows are anomic; what do I mean by anomic? How do I measure it? Suicides of widows. Why? Because suicides of widows are anomic. Suicide is an ex post facto analysis--what he proposes is:

for groups (units), to explain suicide rates (effect variable), one must consider the degree of integration (or the obverse, the degree of anomie) (causal variable). However Durkheim does not discuss conceptual properties of anomie in terms of our analytic scheme of empirical import and formal import, problems of measuring, scaling, etc.

The entire "mood" of Durkheim's work with pathology and anomie is a negative one in the sense of a direction away from the healthy, the normal, or integration. His pessimism on man's inability to control his passions without their control and limitation by society calls to mind the kinds of tensions Freud felt between man's instincts and "civilization."[32] Yet while Freud's tension almost literally snaps and sparks like a broken high tension cable, Durkheim's potential tension fades into background because of his smothering concern with solidarity, self-restraint, and self-control.[33]

What, then, does one learn about conflict in the three major works we have examined? Frankly, very little. To examine conflict in Durkheim requires the use of sharp, reverse English. Clearly his dominant theoretical concerns focus on the Hobbesian problem of order--of solidarity, of constraint, of morals, of collective consciousness. While the increasing division of labor creates more segmental roles, under "normal" conditions this division also brings with it its own style of integration--organic solidarity. As the state enlarges beyond the view of workers, Durkheim suggests the creation of occupational guilds to intercede on behalf of workers (little dreaming they would in turn engulf workers)--the pluralism of de Tocqueville. One comes away from Durkheim with the glue of society clogging the eyes. In short--Durkheim does not concern himself with conflict per se--it operates as a backdrop, a residue category of what happens in the absence of control, the absence of normative integration. His attention is drawn to pathology and anomie as more or less threats to society, as serious problems that should be overcome (at the end of his life, he was particularly pessimistic about the "health" of society--he did not use these words to express this feeling). No class conflicts, political coercion, religious wars, racial tensions, or conflicting interest groups exist in Durkheim's pages. As Coser says, the "investigator of such modern social movements as communism, for example, finds so little aid in Durkheim's sociology."[34] One need only consider the meaning of conflict for Marx to realize the relative silence of Durkheim.

In terms of the components of a frame of reference and conceptual analysis given above, most of the problems raised are "empty cells" for Durkheim with respect to conflict. His closest variable is anomie, but he omits most of the "empirical import problems:[35] theoretically it applies to groups (units) and is an explanatory variable for the effect of suicide. As such Durkheim decreed his attention elsewhere to the problem of order.[36]

IV. Weber

Weber's work will be easier for our purposes as he does address himself directly to conflict per se. The reader is again reminded that no attempt will be made to concern outselves with the overall import of his work. Our concern is solely with the role conflict plays.

The general themes in Weber's life are fairly well known in English sources.[37] His childhood occurred in a home environment permeated with discussions of political issues and visitations by prominent politicians of the day. His father was an active politician in Berlin and eventually a member of the Reichstag. Weber demanded "value-free" sociology, but he could hardly be described as "value-less" in his own political conduct and activities outside the classroom.[38] Without much doubt, one can be sure that Weber was personally involved with "conflict." That he was acquainted with the works of Marx and Freud showed a familiarity with the relevance of conflict in those respective treatments.

But how does Weber use "conflict"? In his magnus opus, Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft, there are only four references to Kampf (conflict), of which only one is significant.[39] "Conflict should be called a social relationship insofar as action is oriented towards the intention of asserting one's will against the opposition of a partner or partners.[40] Weber procedes in these few pages to briefly outline the possible ranges of conflict (bloodshed to medieval chivalry to sports to lovers) and the distinctions to be made between "peaceful conflict" (competition), rivalry, and "selection" (latent conflict). He points out that not all processes of social selection are cases of conflict; but only those selective events involving at least competition. This concern with "selection" becomes clearer when one realizes that Weber wants to distinguish between social and/or biological "selection," and the selection due to the fact that "all changes of natural and social conditions" have some kind of influence on "the differential probabilities of survival of social relationships." Mere survival of relationships is not enough to call this "survival of the fittest." Conflict and competition as social relationships involve subjective meanings and orientations of people toward the relationship at hand; i.e., the ends-means problem.

Thus for Weber, conflict involves a property relationship between two (or more) individuals or parties (as units). It comprises a continuum ranging from open bloodshed to peaceful competition to latency ("selection"); what are the "dimensions" of this continuum? Presumably such elements as consciousness, the meanings assigned to the relationship, and the saliency of the goals (intent) and means deemed usable. Weber particularly investigates the use of physical violence and coercion as a "type" in its own right in his work on the state, economy, law, and his well known types of domination and legitimacy. His work on political sociology will capture most of our attention, but one "preliminary" question first. How pervasive is conflict to Weber? Or, what kind of conflict is more pervasive? Clearly not the Marxian variety of inevitable, class welfare (revolution and physical violence).

> It is only in the sense of "selection" that it seems, according to our experience, that conflict is empirically inevitable, and it is furthermore only in the sense of biological selection that it is inevitable in principle--even on the utopian assumption that all competitions were completely eliminated, conditions would still lead to a latent process of selection...[41]

This neutral process of selection is universal, followed with high probabilities of competition and then conflict. While Weber does not discount the potency of conflict, neither does he take a Marxist view on the matter.

One of the most uniform motifs throughout Weber's work is that of rationality--the increasing rationalization of music, religion, economy, law, urbanization, the state, bureaucratic organization, and authority structures. In carrying out these studies Weber acknowledges conflict (not the violent kind, but one guided by agreed upon rules). His studies on religion reveal the relationships between religious ideology and different social strata and the tendency of one strata to dominate the formulation of religious beliefs, practices, etc. Class is defined along several dimensions concerned with the probabilities of dominance in the economic market, dominance in power, and life styles. Power becomes the probability that A can achieve his will regardless of B's wishes (note this is close to Weber's definition of conflict); and authority is the probability that B will obey A. This opens the door to the bases of legitimacy and to his well known "types". This in no way sufficiently treats Weber's political sociology--but we can see that Weber tolerated considerable opportunities for what Coser says when pointing out "struggle, conflict and contention are in the very center of social life" for Weber.[42]

Though Weber rarely uses the term conflict, he does talk about "struggles for power" and "competition." Thus the shift from a charismatic to a rational basis for legitimacy centers on questions of succession to power and hence power relations and interest group competition. Moreover, each type of legitimacy has its own particular type of struggles for power. For example, in the most "recent" type of organization--the bureaucracy--political struggle sometimes shifts its base to the day to day exercise of authority in the hands of bureaucrats. New roles emerge (the man who lives "off" politics vs. the man who lives "on" politics); his discussion of the way separate power groups emerged from the feudal ages to press continually on the powers of the king until parliments, government bureaus, etc. developed illustrates Weber's superb analytical ability.[43]

The theoretical import of conflict for Weber seems clear--he uses it in the analysis of party struggles in politics, intra-bureaucratic "fighting," religious dominance of a given ideological expression, problems of succession in different and mixed authority systems, and as a background for, say, the development of cities. Conflict is a property relationship applicable to different units and to different problems. Conflict per se is not Weber's concern, but is of interest chiefly for its part in the larger process of rationality and secularization he saw as characteristic of his (and the future as well) times; we should remember that his major studies are historical tracts. Moreover we feel Weber tends to treat conflict as an effect variable (a "problem") rather than a causal or explanatory variable. For example, for each type of domination, Weber delineates the "recurrent issues that characterize the struggle for power," Weber asks what the consequences are for power relationships in different types of legitimacy patterns; he addresses a problem of conflict and seeks an account thereof.

The weakest treatment of conflict in Weber concerns the empirical import of this idea. Nowhere does he present <u>any</u> empirical measure--nor does he suggest any. Nowhere can we find how to conclude that system A has a higher degree of conflict than system B (higher degree in the sense of intensity; i.e., not bullets versus ballots). Weber's discussions are couched in a

style of "reasonableness" in most of his works, which probably reflects his verstehende strategy.[44] Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft contains no tables, statistics, etc. Not that he was a "stranger" to statistical studies,[45] rather he utilizes historical case studies and documents. As mentioned above, he has empirical implications for the concept of conflict as a multidimensional variable--but he no where begins the kind of analysis required by our "model" for empirical analysis discussed previously. Weber's greatest significance is the system of theoretical concepts and methodological strategies he developed--we assert this in spite of his fame for his actual studies on religion, cities, law, and the like. Primarily because we continue today to utilize his ideas (the best example is bureaucracy), though his empirical findings may be modified.

In spite of the above characterization of Weber, some doubt exists in our mind as to the broader significance of conflict in Weber's work. We noted earlier only one reference to the term in his magnum opus; even Bendix feels it unnecessary to list conflict in his book on Weber. The issue is not "words" but "concepts;" however, this is a notable absence in a man claimed as a member of the conflict stream in sociological theory. We associate class and power struggle in Weber, but to the extent these become routinized and regulated, they become competition and not conflict--there's a de-escalationunheard of, say, in Marx (except for the last big clash). Weber never involved himself with open conflicts like wars (he was more interested in the routinization of the military). Responsibility for physical violence was relegated to the state, and given that, Weber becomes more interested in the rationalization and secularization, bureaucratization, etc. within society (religion, economy, cities, music, and law). As with Durkheim, Weber has no consideration for conflict as Marx had--conflict is an ever present phenomenon, but is not in any sense of the word a key element for Weber.[46]

V. Comparison and Conclusions

The comments above already imply comparisons between Durkheim and Weber that are not too difficult to see. In general Durkheim ignored direct confrontation with conflict; where touched upon lightly (labor-capital, widows, etc.) his domain encompasses groups. This clearly overlaps Weber's studies on inter-group (units) competition in religious, economic, and political contexts. Durkheim does not study as rich an assortment of groups as Weber (his widest range of groups, really "collectivities," is in the Suicide study). Both view conflict as a problem--for Durkheim it is a pathological one, a departure from the normal, while for Weber conflict (better--competition or struggle) comprises expected kinds of phenomena; i.e., were "normal." It is our position, though, that neither gives conflict the kind of "status" it has in a Marxian treatment. To the degree that anomie exemplifies a type of conflict and possesses its own properties, one may say that Durkheim uses conflict here as a causal variable to explain the anomic type of suicide (recall the difficulties of avoiding a tautology here and remember that he did not investigate the empirical properties of anomie per se).

Both are weak in terms of the empirical import of the concept. Neither develops an operation set, internal validity, or external validity for conflict as a variable property; neither measures conflict directly; neither attempts scaling or other measurement investigations into the empirical characteristics of conflict; neither can evaluate the theoretical import of conflict--what other conflict theory exists to serve as a measuring rod? In short, though conflict is more salient to Weber's work than to Durkheim's, it remains in a primitive state of development as judged by the criteria set forth in Part I of this paper.

The general conclusion of this paper points out the many "empty cells" in the discussion of conflict in the theorists examined. To the extent that this is more characteristic than not of sociological theory, it illustrates what is meant by our earlier statement that sociology lacks adequate theory construction. Of course this could be a reflection <u>not</u> of sociological thought, but of the inapplicability and inappropriateness of the framework developed by which we make such a judgment. We feel differently--it is the precise virtue of this analytical scheme for theory (and empirical import) in pointing out the empty cells--it provides us with a direction for organizing research efforts--it allows us to estimate some sense of progress in the building up of analysis over time. That the requirements for adequate theory formulation are hard constitutes no reason for denying our lack of knowledge. The application of this framework to other theories on conflict or the use of conflict by other writers allows comparative judgments that assess where we stand with respect to this concept. Moreover, the possibility of synthesis can be analyzed using this framework. The substantive analysis of conflict in Durkheim and Weber illustrates the kind of awareness we need.

FOOTNOTES

1. For a brief listing and note on contemporaries of Durkheim and Weber, see Reinhard Bendix, Max Weber: An Intellectual Portrait (Garden City, New York, 1962), pp. 470-73. A short note on this is contained below.

2. The discussion that follows is based upon lecture notes and unpublished sources by Martin U. Martel: "On the Proper Care and Feeding of Sociological Property-Concepts: A 'Life Cycle' Approach to Conceptual Validity" (Presented at the Annual Meetings of the American Sociological Association in New York City, August 1960; mimeographed, pp. 1-23); "Supplement #1: Some Vignettes on Scientific Theory" (mimeographed, pp. 1-12); "Supplement #2: Some Notes on Axiomatic Systems and Their Applications to Sociological Theories" (mimeographed, pp. 1-12); "Supplement #3.1: Analysis of Theoretical Arguments Incomplete Notational System and Syntax ('Desperanto')" (mimeographed, pp. 1-6); and "Science and Social Science" (mimeographed, pp. 1-15). For a published study utilizing Martel's ideas see Kent P. Schwirian and John W. Frehn, "An Axiomatic Theory of Urbanization," American Sociological Review, December 1962, 27:812-25.

3. For an example of this concept see Martin U. Martel, "Some Controversial Assumptions in Parsons' Theory of Social Systems," Alpha Kappa Deltan, Winter 1960, pp. 53-63.

4. One example of theoretical inadequacy can be seen in the sociological discussions concerned with the "synthesis" between functionalism and conflict theory. Another is this paper--to anticipate the results, there are so many "empty cells" in investigating conflict in Durkheim (especially) and Weber as to illustrate what I mean by "gaps". To anticipate further, the conclusions (largely negative in the sense of "not relevant") for Durkheim lie simply in the realm of effect variables; i.e., he was not concerned with the problem of conflict per se---he was concerned with "order;" but conflict can be understood in Durkheim only in a backhanded way; the conclusions for Weber are not like this, for he is claimed as a "conflict theorist" (at least, in part).

5. This comes from H. Stuart Hughes, Consciousness and Society: The Reorientation of European Social Thought, 1890-1930 (New York, 1961), Ch. 2 "The Decade of the 1890's: The Revolt Against Positivism," pp. 33-66.

6. Hughes does not put it quite this way; besides there is a host of confusions in stating Freud's consciousness and Durkheim's collective consciousness in the same breath. Nor should this use of Durkheim's term imply a "group mind" fallacy. (Parsons has pointed out quite well the difficulty behind this evaluation of Durkheim: "To the

great majority of sociologists Durkheim is still cited as the leading holder of the 'unsound' 'group-mind' theory. It would be difficult to discover a more striking example of the way in which preconceived conceptual schemes can prevent the dissemination of important ideas." The Structure of Social Action (New York, 1961), p. 463. The statement was originally made in 1937.) Rather it is meant only as the characterization of a "mood" in social theory.

7. Hughes, op. cit.

8. Ibid., p. 66.

9. A gross overstatement because, for one thing, Durkheim shifted his grounds: "...from being the most positivistically minded of the protagonists of this study, Durkheim gradually evolved toward a standpoint that was idealist in all but name." Parsons, op, cit., p. 278. Whether one agrees the shift was as strong as Parsons says, the tone of Durkheim's study of religion is quite different from the "hardness" of the study of suicide.

10. For a most readable and perhaps too colorful account of Europe from 1890 to 1914, see Barbara W. Tuchman, The Proud Tower: A Portrait of the World Before the War: 1890-1914 (New York, 1967), especially Ch. 4 "'Give me Combat!' France: 1894-99," pp. 195-263 and Ch. 6 "'Neroism Is In the Air' Germany: 1890-1914," pp. 339-407.

11. Harry Alpert, Emile Durkheim and His Sociology (New York, 1939), p. 30.

12. Robert Nisbet, "Conservatism and Sociology," American Journal of Sociology, 1954, 58:167-75 and Lewis A. Coser, "Durkheim's Conservatism and its Implications for his Sociological Theory," in Emile Durkheim, et. al., Essays on Sociology and Philosophy (New York, 1966), pp. 211-32.

13. Henri Peyre, "Durkheim: The Man, His Time, and His Intellectual Background," in Durkheim, et. al., op, cit., p. 6. Peyre remarks later in his essay on Durkheim's reaction to attacks on the Sorbonne growing out of the Dreyfus case that "Durkheim could not burden his life with idle polemics." Ibid., p. 15.

14. Alpert, op, cit., p. 60, footnote 89.

15. Melvin Richter does cite p. 78 of a 1950 French edition of Professional Ethics and Civic Morals to suggest that Durkheim did find a positive function for conflict; however, he continues and notes that Durkheim "never again took up those insights he had gained through his political thought; that is, that conflict may on occasion serve positive ends..." See Melvin Richtner, "Durkheim's

Politics and Political Theory," in Durkheim, et. al., op. cit., pp. 194 and 203. This is the only reference I have found suggesting any kind of "positive" function of conflict for Durkheim. For an analysis that does focus on Durkheim's works not covered in this paper, see Irving M. Zeitlin, Ideology and the Development of Sociological Theory (New Jersey, 1968), Ch. 15, "Emile Durkheim," pp. 234-80, especially his discussions on Durkheim and conflict pp. 237, 241, 245, 246, 247, 248, 256, 262, 265, and 275. This paper was written before his book was available, but Zeitlin's analysis of Durkheim supports the discussion here.

16. Talcott Parsons, "Durkheim's Contribution to the Theory of Integration of Social Systems," in Durkheim, et. al., op. cit., p. 118.

17. Coser, op, cit., p. 213. This paper and Zeitlin's chapter (see footnote 15) are the most detailed in stating how Durkheim failed to consider conflict in his work.

18. Emile Durkheim, The Division of Labor in Society (Illinois, 1960), p. 14.

19. Ibid., p. 32. In his thesis defense of this study, he was accused of writing a tract on ethics, not science, but Durkheim fielded these and other "attacks" without much difficulty. See Alpert, op. cit., pp. 45-46.

20. For a detailed secondary analysis of such shifts in Durkheim's thoughts, see Parsons, The Structure of Social Action, op, cit., Chs. 8-11, pp. 301-450.

21. Emile Durkheim, The Rules of Sociological Method (Illinois, 1962), p. 3.

22. Parsons, op. cit., Ch. 10, pp. 376-408, especially pp. 378-90.

23. Durkheim, The Division of Labor in Society, op. cit., pp. 353-73.

24. Ibid., pp. 374-88 and 392-93. This is the only hint of class as a differentiating factor found in the book.

25. Durkheim, The Rules of Sociological Method, op. cit., pp. 55-56.

26. Ibid., p. 64. The original is in italics.

27. Ibid., pp. 65-66. He continues to remark that "crime is normal because a society exempt from it is utterly impossible," p. 67.

28. Lewis A. Coser, The Functions of Social Conflict (New York, 1964). See footnote 15.

29. A thorough treatment of the concept of anomie is beyond the scope of this paper. This author has been interested in such an analysis and the treatment of anomie here is based upon two studies: David Sutherland, "On the Notion of Anomie" (manuscript, pp. 1-33) and a more extensive and updated treatment is currently being prepared.

30. Durkheim remarks, "In one sphere of social life, however--the sphere of trade and industry--it (anomie) is actually in a chronic state." Suicide (New York, 1966), p. 254 (Recall his earlier statement in The Division of Labor in Society about labor and capital).

31. Ibid., pp. 258, 259, and 262 respectively.

32. The most concise statement of Durkheim on the relation between the individual and society is in Suicide, op. cit., pp. 246-54. Compare this with Sigmund Freud, Civilization and its Discontents (New York, 1961), pp. 11-92.

33. Thus examine Durkheim's comments on schools, school discipline, and school punishment in Moral Education: A Study in the Theory and Application of the Sociology of Education (New York, 1961), pp. 17-63, 95-126, and 144-206. Along these lines, I cannot think of a more interesting contrast to Durkheim than A. S. Neill, Summerhill: A Radical Approach to Child Rearing (New York, 1961). Further improvement of this paper would include an analysis of Durkheim's sociology of education; however, it is doubtful such considerations would modify our conclusions. See Zeitlin, op. cit., pp. 257-60.

34. Coser, "Durkheim's Conservatism and its Implications for his Sociological Theory," op. cit., p. 223.

35. This is still true today--the only "real" measure is the Srole Anomia Scale, which is a social-psychological measure that, among other things, reflects a shift in units from groups to the psychological perceptions of individuals.

36. For a particularly cogent statement of Durkheim's shortcomings in the neglect of conflict, see Coser, op. cit., pp. 211-12. Unlike the three works examined here, the study on religion has an index. Though we are interested in the idea of conflict, not the "word"-label, there are no headings for conflict, competition, disequilibrium, disorganization, class conflict, or the like. See Emile Durkheim, The Elementary Forms of the Religious Life (New York, 1961), "Index," pp. 499-507.

37. The English sources on Weber's life are H. H. Gerth and C. Wright Mills, "A Biographical View," and "Political Concerns," in

From Max Weber: Essays in Sociology (New York, 1958), pp. 3-31 and 32-44; H.P. Secher, "Introduction," in Max Weber, Basic Concepts in Sociology (New York, 1962), pp. 7-23; Talcott Parsons, "The Author and His Career," in Max Weber, The Theory of Social and Economic Organization (New York, 1964), pp. 3-7; Karl Jaspers, "Max Weber as Politician, Scientist, Philosopher," in Leonardo, Descartes, Max Weber: Three Essays (London, 1965), pp. 187-274; Paul Honigsheim, "Max Weber: His Religious and Ethical Background and Development," Church History, December 1950, 19:3-23 and On Max Weber (New York, 1968), especially "Memories of Max Weber," pp. 1-112); and C. Diehl, "The Life and Work of Max Weber," Quarterly Journal of Economics, 1924, 38:87-107. In German, the primary source is,of course, Marianne Weber, Max Weber: ein Lebensbild (Tübingen, 1926); Max Weber, Jegendbriefe (Tübingen, n.d.) (covers letters from 21 August 1876 to 2 September 1893); Rene' König and Johannes Winckelmann, eds., "Max Weber zum Gedächtnis: Materialien und Dockumente zur Bewertung von Werk and Persönlichkeit," Kölner Zeitschrift für Soziologie und Sozialpsychologie, Sonderheft 7, 1963, pp. 5-271; and Eduard Baumgarten, Max Weber: Werk und Person (Tübingen, 1964).

38. Indeed, in reading for another paper on Weber, I learned of a fairly stiff controversy on the nature of Weber's politics, a topic not usually mentioned in sociological discussions of Weber. See J. P. Mayer, Max Weber and German Politics: A Study in Political Sociology (London, 1956) in which Weber is presented as a bourgeoise German nationalist pre-dating "the German problem" (this book is also a running biography of Weber). See also Wolfgang Mommsen, Max Weber and die deutsche Politik (Tübingen, 1959) and "Max Weber's Political Sociology and His Philosophy of World History," International Social Science Journal, 1965, 17:23-45; and Jaspers, op. cit., especially pp. 195-229. This issue is not a "dead one," as noted by a brief description of the Weber Centenary Conference in Heidelberg. "The report and the discussion which was devoted to the theme 'Max Weber and Power Politics,' showed clearly what is meant by the assertion that we lack a detached distance from M. Weber..." Hans P. Bahardt, "Max Weber und die Machtpolitik," in Hans P. Bahrdt, et. al., "Max Weber und die Soziologie heute: Rückblick auf einem Kongress," Kölner Zeitschrift für Soziologie und Sozialpsychologie, 1965, 17:793. See also Herbert Marcuse, "Industrialization and Capitalism," New Left Review, March/April, 1965, 30:3-17 (this is an English translation of his major address at the Weber Centenary Conference in Heidenberg) and especially Guenther Roth, "Political Critiques of Max Weber: Some Implications for Political Sociology," American Sociological Review, April 1965, 30:213-23.

39. Max Weber, Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft: Grundriss der Verstehenden Soziologie (Studienausgabe) 2 Bände (Köln, 1964), Zweiter Halbband, p. 117. The references are to pp. 27, 30, 66, and 490 all in Volume

I. The only significant one is pp. 27-29 in which Weber defines conflict as a social relationship.

40. Ibid., p. 27. This writer will not procede to translate Weber on his own. However it is interesting to compare his transaction with two others: Parsons: "A social relationship will be referred to as 'conflict' in so far as action within it is oriented intentionally to carrying out the actor's own will against the resistance of the other party or parties." (In Max Weber, The Theory of Social and Economic Organization, op. cit., p. 132. Sechler: "A social relationship will be called a struggle insofar as the behavior of one part is oriented purposefully toward making his own will prevail against the resistance of other parties or another party." (In Max Weber, Basic Concepts in Sociology, op. cit., p. 85). The problems of translation revealed here may be more serious than one might suspect as suggested by a remark addressed to German sociologists: "The assertion expressed occasionally that Germans had forgotten their classical sociology and now learned it again only through American mediation has proven itself false. The number of older and also younger sociologists who for a long time continued to read M. Weber in the original, who learn from him and argue with him without making a detour through American interpretations, is not small." Bahrdt, et. al., op. cit., p. 792.

41. Weber, The Theory of Social and Economic Organization, op. cit., p. 134.

42. Coser, "Durkheim's Conservatism and its Implications," op. cit., p. 220.

43. One of the best overall summaries of Weber's political sociology is Bendix, op. cit., Part III, pp. 285-468, especially pp. 318-25, 348-60, and 431-57 for discussions on power struggles. Recent centenary meetings on Weber have resulted in several special publications: "Papers on Max Weber," American Sociological Review, April 1965, 30:171-223; "Max Weber Weber Today," International Social Science Journal, 1965, 17:9-70; Max Weber und die Soziologie heute. Verhandlungen des fünfzehnten deutschen Soziologentags (Tübingen, 1965), papers in Sociology and Social Research, April 1967, 51:323-60, "Max Weber, 1864-1964: A Symposium," Sociological Quarterly, Autumn 1964, 5:313-99, papers in Sociology and Social Research, April 1967, 51:323-60, and König und Winckelmann, op, cit., pp. 273-488. For a general bibliography on Weber see Hans Gerth and Hedwig Ide Gerth, "Bibliography on Max Weber," Social Research, March 1949, 16:70-89.

44. The study on the Protestant Ethic contains a table in the Appensix relating religious background and educational level. Kenneth Rothrock calculated a chi-square (not significant), but the trouble is,

as Kurt Samuelson points out, the table is incorrect.

45. They remain largely obscure and none have been translated. See Paul Lazarfeld and Anthony Oberschall, "Max Weber and Empirical Social Research," American Sociological Review, April 1965, 30:185-99 and the excellent study of Anthony Oberschall, Empirical Social Research in Germany 1848-1914 (The Hague, 1965), especially Ch. 6 "Max Weber and the Problem of Industrial Work," pp. 111-36.

46. For an opposite view of the one expressed here see Bendix, op. cit., pp. 262-63.